

GARBERVILLE MECHANICS FACILITY

FOCUSED INITIAL STUDY

01-HUM-101

L-5712

EA 266000

JULY 2001



for Jeffrey M. Leaden
John Webb
North Region Environmental and District 3
Planning Division Chief

8/6/01
Date



WHY THIS DOCUMENT?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is proposing to build a mechanics facility building at the Garberville maintenance station. This maintenance station is on the April 1998 Hazardous Waste and Substance Site List (formerly known as the "Cortese List"). An amendment to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that became effective January 1, 1992 stipulates that no project located on a site included on the list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code shall be exempted under CEQA. This initial study has been prepared to comply with this requirement.

The purpose of this focused initial study is to present to the public the environmental consequences of implementing the project. This disclosure document is being made available to the public for review and comment.

Comments should be addressed to:

Jeffrey M. Loudon
Office of Environmental Management, M1
Caltrans North Region
703 B Street
Marysville, CA 95901

Attention: Jennifer Smiley
Environmental Coordinator

The public comment period will close September 20, 2001.

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LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A. Project Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B. Project Location Map
- Exhibit C. Aerial Site Photo

Project Description

The project proposes to build a new resident mechanic's facility within the property limits of the existing Garberville Maintenance Station. It is located approximately two miles north of the town of Garberville off of Highway 101, 0.8 kilometers (0.5 miles) north of the Redwood Drive Overcrossing (see attached project location map, **Exhibit B**). The proposed building will measure 55' x 77' and will be located at the rear of the yard (see aerial site photo, **Exhibit C**). It will consist of two drive-through bays, an office, parts room, a restroom, and a short drive-in bay. Associated drainage work and utility relocation will also be conducted.

Purpose and Need

Fifty percent of the Garberville Maintenance territory equipment cannot be maintained in a safe work environment due to the physical size limitations of the existing drive-in maintenance building. Construction of a resident mechanic's facility will allow for improved maintenance capabilities in the Garberville area.

Project Alternatives

No Build: The No Build alternative would not improve the existing Garberville Maintenance Station and would not meet the District 1, Maintenance's operational needs for this area.

Build Alternative: Caltrans will build a 55' x 77' mechanic's facility. Scope of work includes drainage improvements and utility relocation.

Affected Environment

The habitat surrounding the area is primarily coastal redwood, with some coastal Douglas fir forest intermixed. The Eel River flows less than a quarter mile west of the maintenance station. The Eel River supports several sensitive anadromous fish, including the federally threatened coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), federally threatened Coastal chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and federally threatened Northern California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The entire project area is paved with asphalt and highly disturbed. The Garberville Maintenance Station is listed on the April 1998 *Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List*, also known as the Cortese List.

Environmental Evaluation

To assist in making the environmental evaluation for this project, Caltrans prepared the following technical evaluations:

- Natural Environment Study
- Hazardous Waste Initial Site Assessment
- Cultural Resource Assessment

These studies are available for review at Caltrans North Region, Office of Environmental Management, 703 B Street, Marysville, California, 95901.

Discussion of Environmental Evaluation

An environmental significance checklist was completed and the following potential impacts were identified:

- **Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? (Checklist question IV.a)**

The Eel River is less than a quarter mile from the project site. The Eel River supports several anadromous fish species, including the federally threatened coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), federally threatened Coastal chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and federally threatened Northern California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Due to the proximity of the Eel River, all surface runoff that could carry sediments or other pollutants off-site need to be contained on-site.

- **Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? (Checklist question VII.d)**

The Garberville Maintenance Station is currently included on the 1998 Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (formerly known as the "Cortese List"). Excavation for the building foundation and utility trenches may encounter hazardous waste from (1) a waste oil underground storage tank (UST) that was removed in 1987 and (2) a leach field that was connected to a wash rack on the southern edge of the yard. The wash rack has been replumbed to a zero-discharge recirculating system, and the leach field is still in place and continues to be used for domestic sewage. At this time it is not known what types and levels of hazardous waste exist at this site. A preliminary site investigation will be performed fall 2001. The investigation will take approximately two months and will test soil and groundwater samples for contamination. It is anticipated that small levels of petroleum hydrocarbons will be found and possibly some heavy metals. Based on this investigation a report will be sent from Caltrans District 1 Hazardous Waste Office to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The RWQCB will determine the extent of cleanup necessary. Possible requirements include monitoring of groundwater contamination, soil vapor extraction, and excavation of contaminated soils to be disposed of in a Class 1 or Class 2 landfill.

- **Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality? (Checklist questions VII.a,e,f)**

Surface runoff waters flow into the nearby Eel River, which is a source of drinking water. This was identified as a problem by the Regional Water Quality Control Board after a 1987 fire in the Maintenance Building resulted in contaminated runoff entering the river. The additional discharges of fire protection system testing, flushing, and emergency response water from the proposed project may exacerbate the situation. If possible, project designs should include provisions for capturing such discharges.

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Statewide Storm Water Permit requires that Caltrans implement a year-round program in all parts of the State to effectively control storm water and non-storm water discharges. Soil disturbance will be less than one acre and will therefore not require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). For construction purposes the contractor will be required to provide a Water Pollution Control Plan that adheres to section 7-1.01G of the Caltrans Standard Specifications, also known as “Best Management Practices (BMPs).” Continued use and maintenance of BMPs in conformity with the Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbook will be required to limit any sediment and pollutants from running off site. The new construction and additional design should improve overall storm water quality.

- **Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? (Checklist question XI.d)**

Construction noise from the contractor’s equipment is unavoidable. However, this will be a temporary noise source regulated by Caltrans’ Standard Specifications, Section 71.01I, which would be included as a part of the contract.

List of Preparers

Jennifer Smiley	Environmental Planner, Coordinator
Jeffrey M. Loudon	Senior Environmental Planner, Environmental Management
Krishnan Nelson	Environmental Planner, Biology
Daryl Noble	Environmental Planner, Archaeology
Mark Dubrow	Environmental Engineer, Hazardous Waste
Ilene Poindexter	Senior Design Engineer
Tom Cary	Design Engineer
Friday Ululani	Project Manager

Determination

Based on this evaluation, it has been determined that a Negative Declaration should be adopted for the proposed project. As designed, this project will not have any significant environmental impacts.



JEFFREY M. LOUDON, Chief
Office of Environmental Management M-1
Caltrans District 3

7/25/01
Date



FRIDAY ULULANI, Project Manager

7/30/01
Date

Public Review

(This section will be added after the Initial Study is circulated for public review.)